

THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD A JOINT MEETING WITH THE FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2008, AT 5:00 P.M., IN THE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING ROOM AT THE SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE.

- THERE WERE PRESENT:

Charles Wagner, Chairman  
Wayne Angell, Vice-Chairman  
David Hurt  
David Cundiff  
Russ Johnson  
Bobby Thompson
- ABSENT:

Leland Mitchell
- OTHERS PRESENT:

Richard E. Huff, II, County Administrator  
Vincent K. Copenhagen, Director of Finance  
Sharon K. Tudor, CMC, Clerk

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Chairman Charles Wagner called the meeting to order.  
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Dr. Charles Lackey, Division Superintendent, and Richard E. Huff, II, County Administrator, stated the purpose of the meeting was to bring both Boards attention to the academic and fiscal sides of the Franklin County Facilities Study. Dr. Lackey stated the job will require both Boards working together to get the job done. Dr. Lackey stated he hoped the meeting tonight would be informal and open for talk. Dr. Lackey, advised the Board, Mr. Schmidt, Consultant, will brief the Boards on the report for the Facilities with specific guidelines and timelines. Dr. Lackey stated he would be glad to arrange a tour of the Windy Gap Elementary School should this be their desire.

Mr. Edwin R. Schmidt, Executive Director, Fanning/Howey, Consultant, reiterated the importance for both Boards to work with each other in the programming and financial direction to develop a working plan. Several scenarios for possible solutions to create more space were offered.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Schmidt shared with each Board member a narrative reflection of the Master Facilities Plan presented in 2007 as follows:

**Narrative of the Monopoly Boards for Franklin County Public Schools 2007**  
**Master Facilities Plan**

**(To be considered in concert with the Recommendations on pages 99 through 100)**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

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The map of Franklin County has the existing elementary schools (red) identified at their existing locations and at this time the new Windy Gap (yellow) is under construction. Upon completion, a local redistricting will relieve some of the pressure at the over stressed schools Boones Mill, Burnt Chimney and Dudley. It is realized that the new district for Windy Gap may engulf Burnt Chimney or Dudley (except for walkers). These are the existing conditions and it is upon this situation that the Facilities Plan begins.

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This county map shows the same elementary schools but with the green color, identifies those where student growth is predicted at greater or lesser speed in the period covered in the Demographic Study. The size of the graphic image of each green colored school attempts to convey the relative magnitude of growth in student population. Boones Mill, Rocky Mount, Sontag, Henry and Glade Hill show some growth, while Dudley shows a higher level of growth and Burnt Chimney the highest sustained growth pattern.

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The map is a proposal intended to respond to the growing burden of to many students due to the projected growth in these sectors of the county on top of the existing overstressed conditions.

Specifically, the map suggests that when the appropriate trigger is met, a new elementary school should be provided on the near north side of Rock Mount (hereafter referred to as Rocky Mount III). When time for occupancy, this would allow a major redistricting to occur allowing a complete re-balance of students-to-elementary schools county wide. The new school is strategically located to directly relieve the pressure at Calloway, Boones Mill, Lee Waid, Rocky Mount and Burnt Chimney. Lee Waid and Rocky Mount could experience a double shift. For example, Sontag could give up students to Lee Waid and then in turn, Lee Waid could give up an equivalent number plus their own over population to the new Rocky Mount III. The same concept could occur with Glade Hill giving students to Rocky Mount and then Rock Mount and giving equal amount plus their overage to Rocky Mount III. The point here is that with the addition of Rock Mount III, the overcrowding issues should be resolved for the long term. This solution would be a better solution, more flexible/adaptable to population anomalies and probably less costly, than a series of target small additions to specific existing schools.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL**

### *Introduction:*

The single most important recommendation of this Master Facilities Plan is that FCPS should maintain and build upon the one central high school concept. The most challenging question it poses, is just “how” to accomplish that noble objective. It certainly is possible and feasible, but it will require a concerted, thoughtful and careful engagement by Educators and Administrators to come to grips with the hard questions of program format. Options could include and are certainly not limited to:

- One central mega high school, or
- Freshman Center and High School
- High School (9, 10 or 11) plus a Senior Academy
- Four high school academies (say)
  - Traditional academic
  - Vocational Technological
  - High Technology
  - Arts and Sciences

Of equal significance is the configuration of the Middle School Grades. Franklin County Public Schools should revisit the question of how it delivers its programs to these grade levels. Options at the Middle School level include:

- One (1200 student) central mega middle school (complex), or
- Two (600 student) middle school(s) — allowing a less dramatic transition from the small elementary schools
- One (400 student) building per grade
- The current program of day to day change of venue for the 8th grade.

The underlying concern is that Franklin County Schools should take this rare opportunity to first determine “what is the best program” and then design the facilities and configure them to deliver that program. The program should be the driver in the design and planning process.

This Master Facilities Plan looks at two scenario options. Both see the middle and high school questions as interrelated and inter—dependant upon each other and both use a sequencing approach that would minimize the reliance on portable classrooms to house students while renovating and doing construction work.

### **Middle School / High School Scenario 1**

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*Scenario 1* - solves the building space deficiency and logistical issues by making significant additions and renovations to the existing MS and HS campuses including a strengthened and re-invented Gereau Center Program.

The first step is to construct large addition connecting the Benjamin Franklin East and West building to form one large Middle School building. The addition would include, academic spaces to allow an adequate and robust climate for learning at each grade level. These would be enhanced by an in- house Gereau Center component of equal stature and architectural relevance to the existing remote facility. This would allow the opportunity for broader participation in the

Gereau programs without leaving the campus. The addition would also include additional facilities (like an auxiliary gym — allowing one gym per grade) which are necessary for the number of students to be housed at this major new facility. Once the building addition was complete, other areas of the existing buildings would be vacated allowing for renovations of the entire building and when complete, the existing Gereau Center would be vacant with all Middle School Grade classes being accomplished at the one new Benjamin Franklin (Central) Middle School.

The second step is to complete an addition and renovation of the High School using the Gereau Center building as a temporary swing space to relocate some of students while sectors are vacated to accommodate the demolition, addition and renovations. A more specific sequence description would be to vacate and demolish Tech Buildings A, B, C and D at the High School to make way for a new South Wing. The displaced programs (or an equivalent number of other pull-out programs) could then be temporarily housed in Gereau Center Building. The new South Wing would be constructed and connected at the east end of Ramsey. Once that is completed and occupied, other sections of the building could be vacated and renovated including the connection link between Ramsey and Law. Once all the addition and renovation work are complete at the main campus, the students temporarily housed at the Gereau Center building would be brought back to the High School.

The third step is to renovate the Gereau Center Building to become the new Vocational Tech facility. The goal would be to elevate and strengthen this program as an important and legitimate track option for students responding substantially to trade opportunities in the immediate Rocky Mount Region. This facility could also include an option or an opportunity for adult educational classes. Some of the VoTech functions would require significant renovations and modifications to accommodate those programs including the addition of some high bay and utility space. When complete, the students at West Campus would move in and the old West Campus building disposed.

This would complete a process to bring all the High School programs and classes into two stand alone buildings. The reinvented Vocational Academy at the Gereau Building and a single High School building made up of Law, Ramsey and a New South Wing. One additional auxiliary gym included in the project would allow the Central Gym to return to its function for athletics minimizing the need for students to leave the school building proper during the school day for PE. Finally, it should be pointed out that the work at the High School would incorporate an expanded Gereau Center Program.

The Gereau Center program located both in the middle school and high school buildings now is available beginning at the 6th grade and continuing through the twelfth grade.

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*Scenario 2* – solves the building space deficiency and logistical issues in a much more straight forward manner. The final configuration envisions 13 elementary schools that feed into two 600-student middle schools that in turn feed into one new central high school facility.

The first step is to construct a new High School building in Rocky Mount that is truly designed to support the education program. Once construction is completed, all the high school programs leave the existing campus and move to the new building except the Central Gym which remains as the location for athletics.

The second step is to renovate the old High School Campus and convert it to a new 600-student middle school. With the excess space available in the existing high school building, renovate a designated portion of the existing building into new administrative offices.

The third step is to renovate the Benjamin Franklin Middle School now reduced to a 600 student body. The BF West building is most suited and with updates and renovations would be of equal stature and with equal facilities as the other middle school. The BF East and The Gereau Center buildings could be temporary quarters for these students during the renovation period.

Again, the Gereau Program is incorporated into the curriculum at the middle school and HS experience. The new facilities and central school concept can support that program.

The bonus step for Scenario 2 is that the Benjamin Franklin East building and/or the Gereau Center Building which are both now vacant are available and they are in the ideal location and as a building in which to the Rocky Mount III elementary school could be located at a bargain cost.

*Closing:*

Again, the program and the discussion should not be governed or constrained by what the existing facilities offer, but rather by what program would be best meet the Franklin County needs and how that program would best be delivered.

The Boards will meet again within the next 30 days for further discussion.

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Chairman Wagner adjourned the meeting.

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CHARLES WAGNER  
CHAIRMAN

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RICHARD E. HUFF, II  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR